

THE CITY MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE

Retold by Ardith Davis Cole

A City Mouse and a Country Mouse were acquaintances, so the Country Mouse one day invited his friend to come and see him at his home in the fields. The City Mouse walked and walked until he came to the home of the Country Mouse. A little while after City Mouse had arrived, they sat down to a dinner of barleycorns and roots, which tasted very much like the earth from which they came. The food did not appeal to the guest, and before long he broke out with, "My poor, dear friend, you live here no better than the ants in the ground. Now, you should see how I live! My place overflows with a vast variety of wonderful tastes of every sort. You must come and stay with me, and I promise you, you shall live in the lap of luxury."

So, the next day when the City Mouse returned to town he took the Country Mouse with him and showed him a bountiful quantity of flour and oatmeal and figs and honey and dates. "Indeed, how fortunate you are," exclaimed the Country Mouse, for he had never seen anything like it. So he sat right down to enjoy the plentiful meal his friend provided.

But before they had even begun to eat, they heard footsteps, and then the door of the room opened and someone came in. "Hurry," whispered the City Mouse in a frightened voice. "Hide!" The two mice scampered off and hid themselves in a narrow and exceedingly uncomfortable hole in a far corner of the room. They waited for what seemed like hours. Eventually, when all was quiet, they ventured out again. No sooner had they begun to nibble than someone else came down the hall and opened the door. Off they scuttled once more.

All of this was too much for the visitor. "Good-bye," said Country Mouse, "I'm off. You live in the lap of luxury, I can see, but you are surrounded by dangers, whereas at home I can enjoy my simple dinner of roots and corn in peace."

PROMPTS:

- Give reasons why Country Mouse could not live in City Mouse's house. Be sure to use information from the story for your answer.
- Describe how the houses of City Mouse and Country Mouse were different. Then tell which one you'd rather live in and why you prefer that one.